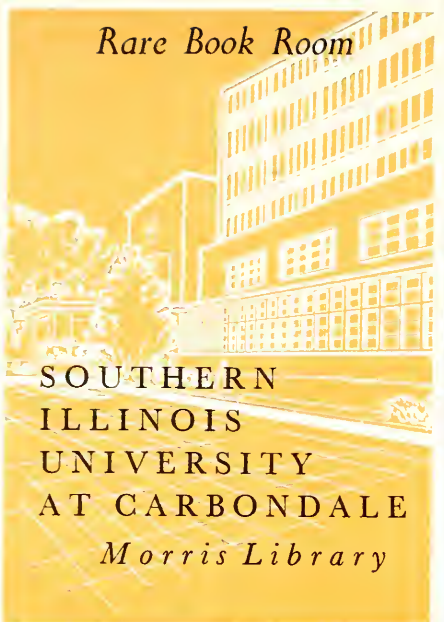
INVITATION

AUX HABITANTS DES ILLINOIS

1772


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Invitation Serieuse
aux Habitants
des
Illinois

The fourth publication of the Club for Colonial Reprints of Providence, Rhode Island

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no 25

Invitation Serieuse aux Habitants des Illinois

by

Un Habitant des Kaskaskias

Reprinted in facsimile from the original edition
published at Philadelphia in 1772
with an introduction
by

Clarence Walworth Alvord
and
Clarence Edwin Carter



Providence, Rhode Island

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Introduction

by

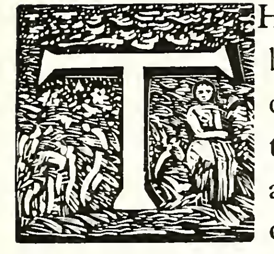
Clarence Walworth Alvord

and

Clarence Edwin Carter

of the

University of Illinois



HE year 1772 — the date written by Du Simitiere on the title page of the following pamphlet — saw the burning of the *Gaspee* and the appointment of the first committees of correspondence. During the previous year the obnoxious Townsend act had been withdrawn, making reconciliation between Great Britain and her colonies seem hopeful; but in the following year occurred the famous Boston Tea Party, which was the prelude to the acts of coercion and rebellion. These events in American history form part of the main current of development, which swept on, from the time of the Treaty of Paris, to the cataract of revolution. Contemporaneously occurred the events from which the pamphlet reprinted in this volume sprang, but so seemingly insignificant were these that the eyes fixed on the main current have scarcely noted the passing of the prairie stream. Yet the history of the genesis of the pamphlet will show that the western land was not unrelated to the East, that the events of the prairie and those of the tidewater were impelled by the same force, and that the ideas in which the revolution had its source raised the waters to a flood in French Illinois.

Before the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, France had nominal possession of the land watered by the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi with all its tributaries. Territorially considered she was the predominant power in North America. In these extensive valleys, however, less than one hundred thousand white persons were permanently settled; Canada at the north and the region around New Orleans at the extreme south containing the bulk of the population, while throughout the Old Northwest French possession was insecurely maintained by a few scattered trading posts and small villages, such as Vincennes and Ouiatanon on the Wabash River, Detroit, Niagara, and Mackinac on the Great Lakes, and other isolated places. The most important center of French population in this region, outside of Detroit, was situated in the Illinois country. Nestled under the lime-stone bluffs on the alluvial soil cast by the turbid Missouri upon the eastern bank of the Mississippi were the villages of Cahokia, St. Philippe, Nouvelle Chartres, Prairie du Rocher, and Kaskaskia. Although this settlement was half a century old, the population, counting whites, blacks, and Indians, numbered scarcely a couple of thousand.

Contrasted with this vast area of French territory

with its sparse population, were the British colonies with more than a million people wedged in between the Appalachian mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. Here the enterprising homeseekers of English, Scotch-Irish, and German extraction were rapidly settling the better lands, so that pressure on the western borders increased every year; and the fertile, unoccupied valley of the Ohio allured the colonists westward in spite of hostile Frenchman and lurking Indian. By the fifth decade the barrier was crossed by constantly increasing numbers, and the French found their possession of the West and their monopoly of the lucrative fur-trade of the lake region seriously threatened. Already the more enterprising and foresighted of the British colonists appreciated the future value of the region and began to plan for its systematic exploitation. In 1748 the Ohio Company, composed of London merchants and Virginia land speculators, obtained from the crown a grant of territory south of the Ohio River. This was the precursor of several companies formed for similar purposes. In 1754 the question of western expansion had assumed sufficient importance to engage the attention of the Albany Congress, and plans for the division of the West into colonies were discussed by that body.

To prevent such encroachments and enterprises, the French erected a line of forts to protect the frontier, and succeeded in holding back the westward-pushing Americans for a few years. The outcome of the Seven Years' War brought this rivalry to a close. Defeated both in Europe and America, France paid the enormous war indemnity of the cession of all her possessions east of the Mississippi River except the Village of New Orleans.

This cession gave a fresh impetus to the spirit of land speculation and exploitation which had been discouraged during the first years of the war. Immediately after the signing of the treaty at Paris in 1763, and before the British ministry had determined its policy in regard to the new acquisitions, the Mississippi Land Company was organized by prominent Virginians and Marylanders for the purpose of planting colonies in the Illinois and Wabash regions. Plans of this character received an official check, when the British ministry announced its western policy in a proclamation on October 7th of the same year. By this proclamation, civil governments were created for the provinces of Quebec, the two Floridas, and Granada, and all the territory lying north of the Floridas and west of the Alleghanies was reserved for the use of the Indians.

Henceforth the colonial governors were forbidden to issue patents for land within this reservation without the consent of the crown. This royal proclamation made no provision for the isolated French villages in the Northwest. Consequently they were left with no government except such as might be exercised by the military officers stationed in them for the regulation of the Indians.

The policy thus proclaimed marks the beginning of that vacillating and at times restrictive policy of Great Britain towards the West, which was continued henceforth through the Revolutionary War. The proclamation was correctly interpreted by the most intelligent American colonists as temporary in character and as issued to reassure the restless and alarmed Indians. It did not, therefore, deter the land speculators and fur-traders. The attitude of several members of the British ministry gave assurance that some plan for the settlement of the region would be finally adopted. Conspicuous among these was Lord Shelburne, who received very favorably Benjamin Franklin's suggestion for the establishment of a proprietary colony in the Illinois country and who agreed to throw all his influence in favor of its adoption. Supported by the influence of such men, successive plans were formed in 1766,

1768, and 1773 to put into execution colonizing enterprises. In these plans such trading companies as Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan of Philadelphia and Franks and Company of Philadelphia and London were promoters, and men such as Sir William Johnson, Benjamin Franklin, William Franklin, the Washingtons, Lees, Fitzhughs with other prominent men in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia were interested.

The earlier plans for colonization were not confined in area, and the promoters allowed their fancies to play with the thought of colonies in Illinois, around Detroit, and on the Ohio; but in 1768 a more definite direction was given to their enterprises. By that time the British ministry had returned to their original purpose of running a boundary line between the settlements and the Indians west of the Alleghanies. At the Treaty of Fort Stanwix this line was determined, and there was opened up for colonization the valley of the upper Ohio River. Lord Hillsborough's hint that the plan for a proprietory colony in this region would receive a more favorable hearing than one in the Illinois, which was at the time under consideration, gave birth to the Vandalia scheme; and the persons who had been most interested in the Illinois

country turned their attention in that direction. It was not until 1773 that new plans for the colonizing of Illinois were formed, and a beginning was made by the purchase of land by the Illinois Land Company. It was during these few years of comparative quiet from speculative enterprises in the far west that the following French pamphlet was printed.

Almost as soon as the Illinois country was occupied by the British Troops, there was an eager rush of English and Americans thither. These were for the most part merchants and traders anxious to participate in the fur-trade and in any other possible advantages which the new country might offer. Many of these purchased lands from the French and even from the Indians in spite of the prohibition by the British government, and some agricultural enterprises were conducted with success.

By coming into contact with these men, the French inhabitants were aroused from a lethargy which had enveloped them for over half a century. Most of the French people of Illinois came originally from Canada. There were among them two classes, the "gentry" and *habitants*, the latter being greatly in the majority. These had belonged to the lower classes of Canada and possessed few of

those social and intellectual attainments which marked their superiors. Occupied chiefly in the collection of furs or in the humbler duties of commerce, they came into close contact with the Indians, in whose villages much of their time was spent. They were in many ways well adapted for this mode of life, for they were active and reckless, and fond of the forest life. Outside of the gains made by the trade in peltry or their wages as boatmen, their lives were not productive, and the little they earned was spent in the pleasures of the village. They cared nothing for agriculture and similar pursuits, and exhibited in all their activities a total lack of initiative and of capacity to adapt themselves to settled life. On the other hand the "gentry," comprising the traders and farmers, came from the better classes in Canada and France. Many were wealthy and influential; some were even of noble birth; and all possessed considerable education. The members of this class were particularly affected by the example of the Americans, and the desire was born within them to acquire for themselves some of the benefits of their position. Illinois was favorably situated to participate in the Ohio and Mississippi trade, and to control a large part of the exportation of furs from the West to

Europe. The various attempts of the Americans to settle the territory had drawn the attention of the more enterprising French to the value of their land for agricultural purposes, and the latter began to dream of a large and prosperous colony of French people in the heart of North America.

It is possible to trace the birth and development of this idea in the minds of the French colonists. Since civil government was not provided for the West by the Proclamation of 1763, it remained under the control of the British commander of the army in North America, General Gage, whose headquarters were in New York. From the time of the occupation of Fort de Chatres in October, 1765, the French settlers and the American traders were subjected to the varying caprices of half a dozen different commandants. All the evils of such a military regime were present. Not only was there friction between the soldiers and the inhabitants, but the commanding officers were frequently guilty of arbitrary and oppressive acts. This was particularly true of Commandants Reed and Wilkins during the years 1766 to 1771. The former demanded, among other unjust exactions, exorbitant fees from the French for administering the oath of allegiance. The inhabitants might

have meekly submitted to such acts of tyranny, had they not been inspired to resist by some of the Americans among them. The most prominent of these latter was a Philadelphia merchant, George Morgan, whose letter-book, kept during these years, is one of the principal sources of our knowledge of the British government in this far away country. Under Morgan's direction, a petition praying the board of trade to grant a civil government to the country was circulated. For the first time the French had used the British method of bringing to the notice of the authorities the wrongs from which they were suffering. From the time of this first declaration of rights their courage grew, and, with their courage and increasing knowledge of English law, their desire for greater liberty developed.

Colonel Reed was succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel John Wilkins, who remained commandant until his dismissal in 1771. Wilkins used his position to further his private interests. He was evidently assisted in this by the American merchants, for several grants of land in which the commandant was partly interested are entered in the Kaskaskia book of records. It was, however, his arbitrary dismissal of the law-court which finally aroused the French to action. This court had been

established by the proclamation of the commandant in November of 1768 for the purpose of trying civil cases and its jurisdiction had been extended to criminal affairs at a later date. Originally the majority of the justices were Americans, the president being George Morgan. For reasons unknown the personnel of the court was rapidly changed, so that at the close of its career, eighteen months after its inauguration, six of the seven justices were of French extraction, but the presidency continued to be held by Morgan. This body became the center about which the French opposition to the military commandant gathered, and its members finally drew up a protest against his arbitrary acts. The protest sounded the death knell of the court, for after June it ceased to meet and Wilkins assumed again the power of jurisdiction.

This act of Wilkins' aroused the French people to take a decided stand for their rights. Henceforth they ceased to depend on their American associates, whose actions appear to have been too often inspired by selfish motives, and several of whom were connected with the speculative schemes of the eastern merchants for exploiting the country by means of American settlers. The French people readily perceived that their interests would not be

promoted by such measures; and yet what had been in the minds of the Americans might be carried to fulfillment by themselves along different lines. At this time Lord Hillsborough was secretary for the colonies and he was known to be a bitter opponent of western expansion, so that restriction seemed to have become a permanent policy, and already many of the American traders who had been interested in the promoters' schemes had become discouraged and were leaving the Illinois. The plan of a French colony appeared to be justified, however, by the actual settlements in existence, and the leaders might reasonably hope that, should proper representations be made to the minister, no opposition to the creation of a French colonial government on the Mississippi was likely to be met.

It was with this idea in mind that the leaders of the French inhabitants called an assembly shortly after the downfall of the court. A citizen of Kaskaskia, Daniel Bloüin, was chosen to go to New York and explain the situation to General Gage. He carried with him a memorial, setting forth the grievances of the people against the military commandant and certain of the American merchants, and instructions to use all possible efforts to obtain a civil government for the country. The French

people had thus advanced beyond their position of 1768, and, without the assistance of the Americans, they had assumed the initiative in a movement for the extension of civil rights to the colony.

The French agent, Daniel Bloüin, chose as an associate in this mission William Clazon, a Frenchman with more experience in English affairs than himself. These two presented their credentials and memorial to General Gage and prayed that a civil government be established in the Illinois country. Their reception was not very gracious, but finally Gage did demand an outline of their plan. Probably the draft of government — Gage speaks of it as a rough outline — had been drawn up by Clazon, for the model of the proposed government was the constitution of Connecticut, the most liberal of the eastern colonies, of which the average Illinois Frenchman could have known nothing. Such a proposal was naturally rejected by the general, who, in order that he might have more information about the conditions, ordered Major Hamilton, the acting commandant in the Illinois, to question the people concerning their wishes. Gage evidently hoped to discredit the two representatives, but in this he was not successful. In a letter to Gage in August, 1772, Major Hamilton relates the results of his

inquiry: "According to your Excellency's directions to me I convened the principal inhabitants of the three villages & desired M. Deberniere to talk to them in the manner you desired about some scheme of Civil Government, they were very high on the occasion & expected to appoint their Governor & all other Civil Magistrates, but on being desired to draw up their plan in writing and sign it, they told me that before M. Bloüin left the Country, at a General meeting they had fixed upon a Scheme which Mons. Bloüin was to lay before your Excellency & till he returned & they knew what success he had met with, they could give no answer."

A few weeks later, Gage transmitted to Secretary Hillsborough the following account of these negotiations: "An answer has been returned to the proposals sent to the Illinois for the arrangements for that Country, with an account of the motives the people of those Settlements have formed of a Civil Government; which I transmit your Lordship in the inclosed Extract of a letter from Major Hamilton. These ideas were given them by the Mons. Bloüin mentioned in the Major's letter, or rather an associate of his named Clajon, a Frenchman by birth, an adventurer, artful and intelligent, who

after passing some years in these Colonies went to the Spanish side of the Mississippi & during his residence in the Colonies, he learnt the English language & got a shallow knowledge of our Laws. Those two people came to me from the Illinois about twelve months ago; but from their character, the disturbance they had occasioned in the Country & the extravagant proposals they brought, I refused to enter into any conference with them on subjects that had relation to Civil Government."

While these negotiations were being carried on, there was printed at Philadelphia the following pamphlet, entitled, "*Invitation Serieuse aux Habitants des Illinois.*" Aside from the interest of the pamphlet as an historical document, it is worthy of notice that it is the first publication written for western readers by one who could call himself a citizen of Illinois. A careful reading of the pamphlet shows that it must have been composed by some member of the French party which was seeking to obtain a civil government, for the ideals set before the readers are those which would promote the development of the French communities. As its title implies it is an urgent exhortation to the Illinois French, inviting them to unite in an effort to win for themselves economic independence.

"For this purpose let us unite in heart and interest to encourage the agriculture and commerce of our country in its whole extent," is the burden of the message. The body of the work consists of an enumeration and description of the products, such as lead, salt, liquors, wines and sugar, which can be produced in the Mississippi valley. The readers are told that with industry and care the amount of money which is now expended on the importation of such articles can be saved. Other industries can also be introduced, as the brewing of beer, the cultivation of tobacco, hemp, flax, silk and cotton.

The author's admiration for the English and their ways is evident. He urges his compatriots to lay aside their ill-humour at the introduction of new ways and industries by these strangers, for they have proved the possibility of distilling liquors at Kaskaskia, and one of them has introduced several kinds of fruit trees. The writer expects that New Orleans will be occupied by the British in a short time, so that the navigation of the Mississippi will be open to the colonists. It seems probable that there is in the thought of the author the possibility of a French colony occupying both banks of the Mississippi: "for we all know that there is no extent of bad land on either bank of the Mississippi from

the sea to the Falls of St. Anthony. There is no lack of hills and plains fitted for the culture" of vines. The Illinois French have not yet enjoyed any advantages from becoming British subjects; but this has been due to their great distance from their sovereign and parliament. These latter would long since have granted them a civil government, had they been informed of the importance and consequence of the colony to the empire. There is added the hope that in a short time the right to enjoy their religion will be confirmed and a civil government established. The pamphlet closes with an exhortation that schools be founded so that all the children may be taught to read and write their mother tongue and that some may be able to learn the English language.

The writer signs himself, "An Inhabitant of Kaskaskia," and there is no other indication in the pamphlet of his identity. The whole tone of the work forbids assigning its authorship to one of the many Americans who were interested in the Illinois country. The language, also, is that of the French-Canadian of the West rather than the more perfect French of the school, which would have been written by an American. Instinctively the names of Daniel Bloüin and William Clazon come to the

mind, and one or both may have been the author, for they were in the East, and were both so full of hope in their mission that they might well have written in 1772 that it was possible that a civil government would soon be inaugurated.

The pamphlet was printed in Philadelphia in the year 1772 according to Du Simitiere, from whose library the only existent copy was acquired by the Philadelphia Library Company, which has kindly permitted the present facsimile to be made. Had the pamphlet been printed in New York, we should not have hesitated to assign its authorship to Bloüin or Clazon, by preference to the former, for he was an inhabitant of Kaskaskia and Clazon was not. On account of the close commercial relation between the West and Philadelphia it is possible that these representatives of Illinois spent some of their time in the more southern city; but for a similar reason other members of the French party may have been called to the same place; or the pamphlet may have been written in the West, and the manuscript sent to Philadelphia with a consignment of furs. The possibilities of authorship are, therefore, too numerous to warrant ascribing the writing of the pamphlet to anyone. We must be content to have shown the causes from which it arose and

the party to which its author must have belonged.

The French party failed to attain its purpose, for the British ministry would not even entertain the proposed plan of government. The attention of the authorities had been called, however, to the needs of the Illinois villages; and it was to relieve the situation that General Gage, acting under advices from the ministry, sent thither in 1773 an outline of a plan of government, which contained some popular elements, but which retained the power of appointment and control in the hands of the home authorities. This plan was submitted to the people by the British commandant at Kaskaskia, but was promptly rejected.

This event closed the successive attempts to create in Illinois an independent colony. The same year the Illinois Land Company purchased from the Indians a large tract which they proposed to colonize, but the purchase was shortly annulled by the authorities, and nothing further was done by the promoters until after the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.

During the years passed in review by this sketch, events were occurring in Canada, which caused the ministry to take into consideration the needs of that colony. The proclamation of 1763,

by introducing English law, had brought many hardships to the French-Canadians. The grievances of these latter were at last to be investigated by the ministry and parliament. The British government understood now, better than in 1763, the conditions in the far West, and a solution of the problem there appeared to be closely connected with that of Canada. It was determined, therefore, to consider both questions at the same time. For this purpose among others General Gage was summoned home in 1773 in order that he might give information in regard to the West. The result of his recommendations and of the investigations of the ministry and parliament was the Quebec Act of 1774. By this act the whole Northwest was united to the province of Quebec, and provision for the government of the Illinois villages was made in the instructions to the governor, which were shortly afterwards issued. These were never put into execution, because the outbreak of the war with the colonies made the maintenance of a military force in such distant villages seem dangerous. A new series of events now began in the French villages, which was to end in the acquisition of the whole region by the new state which was born; but these events have no bearing on the following pamphlet.

The Reprint

INVITATION

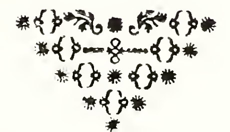
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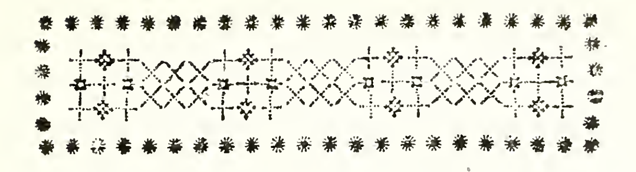
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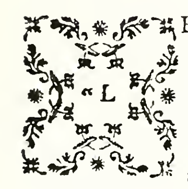
INVITATION

SERIEUSE AUX HABITANTS

DES

ILLINOIS.

Mes Freres,



"LES connoiſſances ſont de peu d'uſage, lorſqu'elles ſont reſtrainte à la ſimple ſpeculation; mais lorſque des verités ſpeculatives ſont reduit à la pratique, lorſque des theories, fondés ſur l'experience ſont appliqué aux uſages de la vie, et lorſque par ces " moyens l'agriculture eſt perfectionnée, le commerce etendu, " les facilités de la vie rendus plus aiſé et plus agreable, & " conſequemment, l'accroiſſement et le bonheur du genre hu- " main augmenté, alors les connoiſſances ſant avantageuſes."

Tous les membres d'une ſocieté qui en ont la capacité et le pouvoir, ſont ſans doute obligé de contribuer, au progrés de ces connoiſſances. Ceux qui ne le peuvent par la communication des leurs, et de leur experiences, doivent ſoigneuſement écouter les inſtructions de ceux qui le peuvent, et qui le

ſont

ſont avec verité et bonté de coeur, particulierement, les habitants des nouveaux établiſſements, afin de pouvoir obtenir les connoiſſances neceſſaires ; et par ce moyen la perfection de leur établiſſements.

Les habitants des Illinois ſouffrent de grandes difficultés par les deſavantages et les grands découragements qui s'oppoſent à leurs efforts, en tàchant de perfectionner leur agriculture, leur commerce et tous les autres arts neceſſaires. Mais ſi chacun de nous, ſelon notre ſituation et pouvoir voulions nous efforcer, d'ameliorer notre ſituation, et notre pays, nous pourrions en peu d'années, rendre cette colonie la plus heureuſe du continent.

Pour cet effet, uniſſons nous de coeur et d'intérêt afin d'encourager l'agriculture et le commerce de notre patrie dans toute ſon etendüe ; en nous oppoſant auſſi, à l'introduction de toute les choſes étrangéres, dont nous puiſſions nous paſſer avec facilité et ſans inconvenient, ou que nous puiſſions fabriquer nous mêmes. Les articles ſuivantes peuvent immediatement être effacé de nos memoires d'introduction, et ſoub peu d'années, nous ſerons enétat de nous paſſer de nombres d'autres, que nous pourrons nous procurer ; et que nous ſommes actuellement obligé de tirer d'Europe, ou de quelque colonie Ameriquaine.

1. . . . . Plomb en Plaques a Balles et a Giboyer.
2. . . . . Sel.
3. . . . . Eau-de-vie de France, taffia, et liqueurs fortes de toute eſpece.
4. . . . . Vin, et
5. . . . . Sucre.

Il y a longtems que nous nous plaignons de manquer d'argent, et de notre incapacité de payer les debtes que nous avons

contracté

contracté pour les susdits articles, et quoique nous paroissons être convaincu, que nous pouvons éviter d'en introduire, neanmoins nous continuons à le faire, et pour ce, sommes obligez de contracter de nouvelles debtes; sans faire le moindre effort, pour nous affranchir de ce mal dangereux. Il est vrai, que nombres de bon et vertueux habitants des Kaskaskias ont deja vu leur erreur et ont commencé à y remedier; afin d'eviter les dangers, qui menaçoient leur negligence; je ne doute même pas, que soub peu de tems nous ne joignions nos efforts tous ensembles, pour encourager, et faire fleurir tout ce qui peut être cultivé ou manufacturé dans notre colonie.

Afin d'y contribüer, et de rendre les habitants des Illinois aussi riche et heureux, qu'ils sont affectionnéz et humain, je me propose de convainere ceux d'entre nous, qui n'ont pas encore attentivement consideré cette matiere.

Prem. Que, nous sommes en possession, ou que nous pouvons cultiver, ou manufacturer, chacune des articles sus mentionnez, d'une aussi bonne qualité, et peut être meilleure que celles que nous faisons venir.

Second. Que, le montant de l'epargne ou profit, que cela donnera, au peu d'habitants qui sont actuellement aux Illinois, montera dés le principe, à deux cent vingt cinq mille livres par an. ce qui dans le cours de cinquante ans, montera à la somme de onze millions deux cents cinquante mille livres; une telle somme, nous rendra la plus riche et florissante colonie de l'Amerique, et mettra notre posterité en etat, suivant leurs inclinations, ou, de se retirer en Europe en etat de s'etablir a leur aise, ou bien de se fixer dans cet heureux pays, pour y jouir des fruits de notre industrie, en poursuivant avec prudence les moyens que nous avons actuellement en notre pouvoir.

Quelques

Quelques uns de nous, ſommes à la verité avancé en âge, et il eſt ſouvent difficile de ſe perſuader d'abandonner un ſentier frayé et pratiqué par nos peres et nous mêmes ; d'autres faute de ſavoir mieux, ſont prevenus en faveur des methodes dans leſquelles ils ont èté elevé, et comme les ſauvages, ne voulant pas être inſtruit perſiſtent dans leur folle ignorance, mais comme je me flatte, qu'il n'y en a que trés peu de ce dernier nombre parmi nous et que les autres ont un deſir ſincere de faire fleurir notre ſituation et celui de notre poſterité, travaillons donc je vous prie conjointement a inſpirer en tous les habitants ſans diſtinction, les connoiſſances neceſſaires à cette heureuſe fin ; et je ne doute nullement du plus heureux ſuccés, Car.

Prem. Nous avons pluſieurs mines de plomb, qui ſans beaucoup de travail, nous donnera plus de ce metal, quil ne ſera neceſſaire, pour la conſommation de tous les habitants, et pour le commerce des Indiens ; et dans une ſuite d'années, nous pourrions être en etat d'en fournir, non ſeulement à tous les ports de l'Amerique, mais même à grande partie de l'Europe s'ils le requeroient. Ainſi j'eſpere qu'on conviendra ſans difficulté, que nous aurions tort d'introduire dans cette colonie, du plomb en plaque a balles ou a giboyer, dailleurs, quelqu'une de ces mines ſont melées d'argent, et nous avons toute raiſon de croire, que ſoub peu d'années, nous pourrons procurer des ouvriers, capable de ſeparer ce precieux metal, à notre grand avantage. Les recherches même que ces mines nous occaſioneront, pourront nous conduire, à la connoiſſance de quelques unes de fer ou de cuivre, metaux d'une valeur plus réelles que l'or et l'argent du Perou.

Second. Notre pays abonde en ſources ſalées, deſquelles nous pouvons tirer plus que deux fois la quantité de ſel, neceſſaire pour notre conſommation a beaucoup meilleur marché

que

que nous ne pouvons l'acheter, et presqu'egal en qualité; nous pouvons donc nous passer du sel d'Europe et d'ailleurs.

Trois. Des vins fait de nos raisins, et des grains de notre crû, nous pouvons faire del'eau-de-vie, egal pour la qualité et le goût, au meilleurs de Cognac, et du taffia beaucoup superieur a celui qu'on nous porte, de la Nouvelle Orleans, et d'autre lieux; et a moins de la moitié du prix que nous payons pour ces articles. De ceci, nous avons une preuve convaincante, par la manufacture dernierement etablie aux Kaskaskias laqu'elle si elle etoit encouragée, sans jalousie ni prejugé contre les proprietaires, nous auroit été d'un grand avantage. Il est en verité à souhaiter, que nous pussions nous passer de toutes liqueurs spiritueuses, mais comme cela est presqué impossible et que les meilleurs, et les plus savants medicins, sont convenu que l'esprit extrait des bons grains, de la maniere qu'on le pratique actuellement, en France, en Hollande et a l'Amerique du Nord, est le plus sain et le meilleur de tous, nous devrions certainement, suivre ce plan heureux, que nous pouvons executer avec tant de facilité et distiller nos liqueurs spiritueuses nous mêmes; sans en acheter ni de la Nouvelle Orleans, Philadelphia, ni autre Lieux : Monsieur Tissot celebre Mediçin Français et auteur de plusieurs ouvrages considerables et très estimez, dans ses instructions sur la conservation de la santé, dit, « Les esprits extraits des grains, sont « nourissants et fortifiants, et peuvent être d'un grand usage; « riches et égayants autant que le vin, beaucoup plus nou- « rissant, pouvant servir demanger et de boisson." Boerhaave de qui le nom est fameux partout dans la medecine, dit, « L'esprit « extrait des grains, est le plus egayant et du meilleur usage."

Les Anglois industrieux, ont introduit parmi nous, une boisson pour l'usage ordinaire qui ne nous etoit connu, que par le peu que les Reverend Peres Jesuites faisoit pour le

leurs;

leurs; on s'apperçoit que je parle de la bierre, ils nous la vendent a fort bon marché et offrent d'inſtruire nos familles a la faire d'une qualité bien meilleurs et a une très petite dépenſe; ceci n'eſt pas la ſeule des choſes neceſſaire qu'ils ont introduit parmi nous; l'un d'eux a apporté ici a des fraix conſiderables une grande quantité d'arbres fruitiers, de preſque toutes les eſpeces, et en outre du chanvre, du lin, de l'orge, des patattes, des navaux et bien d'autre choſes que nous n'avions pas vu ici auparavant, leſquels il a diſtribuè à tous ceux qui ont voulu prendre la peine de les cultiver et travailler à la propogation de ces denrées, ſi neceſſaire et avantageuſe a cette partie du monde.

Il n'y a point de doute, que bien des particuliers qui font le commerce de la Nouvelle Orleans et de Philadelphia ici, auront de l'humeur contre ces Anglois nos bienfaiteurs, et tâcheront d'injurier leur commerce, en décriant la bonté et la qualité de leur marchandizes, en ce que, leur petit commerce eſt en quelque façon prejudicié par la diſtillerie et la braſſerie établie ici; mais, n'ecoutons point ce que peuvent dire des gens, dont l'interêt eſt de nous tenir dans une ignorance, ſur lequel il voudroit établir leur avantage. Car certainement aucun homme raiſonable ne pourra dire, que nous devrions introduire des eau-de-vie ni des taffia, de la Nouvelle Orleans, Philadelphia, ni autre lieux, pouvant nous mêmes en faire de meilleures; et en quantitéz ſuffiſante pour notre conſommation, et pour le commerce avec les Indiens, ſans appauvrir notre pays, par la ſortie de l'argent neceſſaire a l'achat de ces articles, qui nous ont couté juſqu'a preſent, au deſſus de cent mille livres par an.

Quatr. A l'egard des vins étrangers de toute les eſpeces, nous n'en aurions pas beſoin d'une ſeule barrique, ſi nous voulions prendre la peine, de cultiver les differentes eſpeces des vignes

vignes qui croiſſent naturellement en ce pays et en introduire des rejettons de France et d'autres lieux ce qui ſe pourroit faire a très peu de fraix ; d'ailleurs, comme le froid et la longueur de l'hiver augmente, plus nous montons le Miſſiſſippi, ainſi plus nous deſcendons, la froideur et la longueur de cette ſaiſon eſt plus moderée, de ſorte que nous pouvons faire choix du climat le plus propre pour la culture de ces differentes eſpeces de vignes, ſans crainte de manquer de terres propre et excellente à cette fin, car nous ſavons tous, qu'il n'y a point d'etendue de mauvais terrain ni de l'un ni de l'autre coté du Miſſiſſippi, depuis la mer juſqu'au chutes de St. Antoine, ce qui fait plus de huit cent lieues le long de ce grand fleuve ; il n'y manque pas non plus de coteaux, ni de plaines propre à cette culture, la divine Providence nous a fait tous ces dons precieux, qui peuvent être regardéz comme une recompenſe, pour la diſtance a la quelle nous ſommes ſituées de la mer, et pour la difficulté de notre communication avec d'autre peuples.

Malgre les difficultés que nous ſouffrons dans la recolte des raiſins, le manque de vaiſſeaux neceſſaires, et la methode la plus propre, l'experience nous a demontré, que dans nos divers villages, nous pouvons faire annuellement des vignes ſauvages, cent cinquante barriques de vin rouge, de bonne qualitè, et d'un bon corps ; et ſi nous voulions obſerver, de ne point couper et detruire les vignes comme nous le faiſons en cueillant les raiſins, en vue de faire plus de dépêche, nous pourrions en peu d'années en faire une quantité bien plus grande et de meilleure qualité. La raiſon ne dicte telle pas, que par la nous detruiſons et faiſons beaucoup de tort a nombres de vignes et en empêchons l'accroiſſement, mais ſi au lieu de les rompre et detruire de cette façon, nous voulions nous donner la peine de les tâiller avec prudence, leur produit

nous recompenferoit avantageufement. Nos coteaux, nos vallées, et nos plaines, font remplies de vignes qui leur font naturelles ils croiffent dans tous les terroirs, et font propres à tous les climats, fans cultûre ils fe chargent de fruits en abondance, plufieurs des quels d'un goût riche et excellent, par ceci la nature fe joint à la raifon pour nous demontrer.

Que fi nous voulions prendre la peine de planter de petits vignobles, et leur donner le foin neceffaire, foub peu d'années leur production nous feroit d'un grand avantage; et par le moyen de quelque petite recompenfe, nous trouverions des gens qui nous inftruiroient dans le menagement de la vendange et la façon de faire le vin, ce qui nous feroit d'autant plus avantageux, que nous pourrions le faire meilleur que celui qu'on nous apporte, et à aufi bon marché qu'on le boit en France; nous pourrions même par la fuite des tems, en envoyer aux Anglois et a leur colonies.

Quelques Européens pourront fe moquer de ce que j'avance ici, et diront que je propofe des impoffibilité; fi on leur demande fur quoi ils fondent cette opinions ils diront; que les Creoles (nom qu'ils nous donnent par derifion) font trop ignorants et trop pareffeux, pour fe donner de telles peines, que nous na'vons aucune experience en de telles affaires, que le travail eft trop cher parmi nous, et nombres d'autres raifons pareils, qui felon moi n'ont pas le moindre poid. force, ni fondement.

Il n'eft en verité que trop vrai, que jufqu'a prefent nous avons été tenû dans une grande ignorance, mais cela ne prouve pas que nous devions y continuer. Nous devons auffi confeffer, que nous avons trop negligè la recherche des connoiffances neceffaires à notre bien être & à celui de notre pofterité future, determinons donc de ne plus nous abandon-

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ner à cette indolence, et comme nous avons déja, dans les divers campagnes de la guerre passée demontré, que nous sommes egaux, et en bien des cas superieurs, aux Européens, de même contestons avec eux, par notre industrie et par nos efforts, à nous procurer les richesses et les connoissances necessaire a notre bien être, et a celui de notre posteritè, & au lieu de passer notre temp a fumer du tabac, dans la vanité & l'indolence qu'ils nous reprochent, determinons une fois, de regler notre conduite d'une façon toutte contraire.

Cinq. Le sucre, est un article dont nous n'avons aucun besoin, ce pays ci ètant rempli de sucriers, desquels plusieurs familles tirent déja des quantités suffisantes pour leur consommation, et même pour vendre à d'autres, peu de gens par un travail moderé, pendant le cours d'un mois, pourroit en faire une quantité, suffisante pour la consommation de tous les habitants des Illinois. En outre, nous avons raison de croire, que l'arbre dont aux Indes on fait l'Arrack, est le même que notre erable dont nous tirons le sucre, s'il est ainsi, le sirop que nous en tirons feroit un esprit, bien superieur à toute celle que nous ayons jamais vu en cette partié du monde. Dans la partie du ouest de la Virgine, ils tirent tout le sucre qu'ils consument de l'Erable, quoiqu'ils ne soient qu'a une très petite distance de la mer.

Outre les articles susmentionnéz, nous devrions aussi donner nos soins à la culture du chanvre, du lin, & de l'herbe a coton, touteces choses croissent ici beaucoup mieux qu'en aucune des colonies de la Nouvelle Angleterre; de ces productions, nos femmes & nos filles, pourroient faire tout le linge necessaire au menage, pour notre usage et celui de nos domestiques, bas, et autre partie de nos habillements; ce qui nous feroit une epargne très considerable, je ne fais nul doûte

doûte que les dames ne se portassent avec beaucoup de satisfaction, au succés d'un projet si avantageux.

Un autre article qui paroit trés propre a ce pays & à ce climat, est la soie; de cette manufacture nous pourrons ci aprés, nous promettre des richesses immenses, ètant proprement etablie. Les habitants des deux Carolines & de Pennsylvanie l'ont commencé et y trouvent deja un avantage considerable, quoique ces provinces ni sont en aucune façon aussi propre que celle ci, la quantité des muriers dont nos campagnes abondent, nous le demontrent evidemment.

Je nedois pas omettre d'informer mes pays, que la culture du tabac dans la Virgine, (qui n'est qu'une petite colonie, dans le pays que nous appellons la Nouvelle Angleterre) procure annuellement au Roi d'Angleterre un revenu de trois cent mille livres sterling, egal a six millions six cent mille livres de notre monnoie; outre le prix principal, qui appartient aux cultivateurs & aux negociants qui l'achetent, et cette somme leur est remboursé avec grand avantage par les Français à qui ils vendent cette marchandise; outre cet avantage, ce commerce emploie au moins quatre mille matelots pour transporter cet article dans leurs vaisseaux en Europe; si donc la petite ile & ville de la Nouvelle Orleans appartenait a la Grande Bretagne, (ce qui ne pourra pas manquer d'être au cas d'une Nouvelle Guerre avec l'Espagne) le tabac sera un article bien considerable, & avantageux pour ceux qui voudront la cultiver sur les bords du Missisippi, car le terrain de de la Virgine est presque usé, et ne peut pas continuer longtèms a produire cette denrée comme elle a fait ci devant. D'ailleurs, les terrains sur le Missisippi, sont par leur quantitè & qualitè, si superieure pour la production du tabac, que si les Anglois venoient à en avoir la possession, nous pourriens devenir

devenir en peu de tems, la plus floriſſante colonie du monde; et par une conduite prudente, et ſoumiſe aux loix d'Angleterre, aux devoirs de notre ſainte religion Catholique, et en conſervant une charité univerſelle pour tous les hommes, nous deviendrions le peuple leplus heureux du genre humain. Il eſt vrai que juſqu'a preſent, nous n'avons reçu que peu d'avantage d'être devenu ſujets Anglois, quoique nous nous fuſſions formé les idèes les plus avantageuſes, de la douceur, de la liberté, et de la ſageſſe des loix de cette brave nation, mais nous devons attribuer ce contretemp, à la diſtance à laquelle nous ſommes placé du Souverain et du parlement de la Grande Bretagne, qui s'ils etoient entierement informé de l'importance & de la conſequence de cette colonie à leur empire, nous auroit ſans doute avant ce tems accordé un gouvernement civil, au moyen duquel nous n'aurions point été ſujet, aux impoſitions, et aux oppreſſions de nos tirans paſſé; neanmoins, nous devons actuellement reconnoître avec reconnoiſſance, que nous ſommes heureux, d'avoir un Commandant * qui deteſte toute action injuſte ou arbitraire tâchons donc de le convaincre, que nous ſommes des vrais & zelées ſujets de ſa Majeſté Britannique, et ne doutons nullement que ſoub peu, la jouiſſance de nos droits religieux nous feront confirmées, et l'admiſtration du gouvernement civil ſera etabli parmi nous. Nous ne pouvons à preſent que deſirer ces heureux evenements; et en même tems je m'efforcerai de prouver, les avantages qui reſulteront ſi nous ceſſons cy apres d'introduire les articles ſuivantes, a ſavoir plomb, ſel, eau-de-vie, taffia, vin, et ſucre, et ne faiſons uſage que de ces mêmes articles, produites & fabriquéz parmi nous a ſavoir 20,000 lb. plomb en plaque, a balles & a giboyer. Que

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* Monsieur Le Major Iſaac Hamilton.

je suppose sevendront l'un en l'autre à 15 sous, ...	15,000
1000 l. boisseaux de sel à 15 livres, ...	15,000
2000 pots Eau-de-vie à 7 livres 10 sous, ...	15,000
20,000 pots taffia Anglais & Français a 5 livres, . .	100,000
150 barriques de vin a 400 livres, ...	60,000
10.000l. sucre à 40 sous, ...	20,000
	225,000

Il paroit par ce calcul qui est tres moderé, que nous depensons 225,000 livres par an pour ces six articles, que nous pourrions à trés peu de fraix manufacturer nous même, que dans le cours de cinquante ans ces mêmes, articlesnous couteroient la somme de 11,250,000 livres que nous pourrions sauver nous même, et remettre en Angleterre ou en France suivant nos inclinations. Si à cette somme, nous ajoutions ce que nous pourrions sauver, par la culture et manufacture du lin, du chanvre, & du cotton, nous ne pourrions pas estimer cette somme, à moins de 15,000,000 de livres, c'est à dire, qu'au bout de cinquante ans nous serions plus riche que nous ne le sommes, de 15,000,000 de livres, pourvû nous cessions d'introduire les dittes articles, et commencions a les manufacturer nous mêmes, que si nous persistons en notre conduite presente. Resolvons donc tous ensemble de coeur & d'affection, d'eviter le mal et de choisir le bien, pendant que nous l'avons encore en notre pouvoir, et cessons enfin d'être un reproche parmi nos freres Européens, qui ne cessent avec juste raison, de se moquer de notre indolence & de notre folie.

Avant que de prendre congè de vous permettez moi mes chers freres, avec l amitié la plus sincere de vous faire encore une fois ressouvenir de notre posterité qu'il est de notre devoir absolu de leur procurer les connoissances les plus eten dues

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& les plus ſalutaires. Cela etant, comment pouvons nous nous permettre, de les voir rôder dans nos rües, plus comme des vagabonds & des ſauvages, que comme des chretiens. Nous avons déja eu, une longue experience de la pitié & de la vertu exemplaire de nos reſpectables peres Murrain et Gibeault employons donc un maitred' Ecole en chacun de nos villages, et ſupplions ces reſpectables ſuperieurs, d'inſpecter leur conduite, nous ſommes tous en état et je me flatte porté de bonne volonté. A faire bâtir une Ecole au milieu de chaque village & d'en payer les maitres à leur ſatisfaction; les étrangers qui ſont venu parmi nous, ont obſervé que la valeur du tabac que nous ſumons dans l'oiſiveté, ſuffiroit pour cette depenſe; mais il n'y a pas de doute, que nous pourrions payer ces fraix, en produit du pays ce qui couviendroit également, à un maitre d'Ecole qui auroit une famille; je voudrois donc propoſer qu'on enſeignat a toute notre jeuneſſe, à lire & à écrire correctement leur langues maternelles, & l'arithmetique commune au moins, il ſeroit auſſi ſelon moi neceſſaire, que quelques uns et même tous s'il etoit poſſible, puſſent apprendre la langue Anglaiſe, ce qui leur ſeroit d'un très grand avantage.

Je ſouhaite de tout mon coeur que les avis ſus mentionnéz, ſoyent acceptéz par mes pays, avec la même ſincerité & la même affection que je les donne et je me flatte qu'aprés les avoir mûrement conſideré, ils en feront leur avantage et le fondement de leur bonheur futur.

Un Habitant des Kaskaskia.

Bibliographical

Data

IN writing the introduction we have made use of all available sources, some of which have not been seen by previous historians of the period. The "Kaskaskia Records," although not as rich for the British regime in Illinois as for either the previous or succeeding period, contain some most interesting documents. The most important of these is the "Register of the Court," begun in December, 1768, and continued by the military commandants after Colonel Wilkins discharged the justices in 1770. In the same volume is the power of attorney given to Daniel Bloüin by the Illinois French. In the collection, besides the "Register," are single papers that contain valuable information, among which is the original draft of the constitution sent by General Gage to Illinois. In the Haldimand Collection of the British Museum is a copy of this, made at Kaskaskia, with the endorsements of those through whose hands it passed. From the Haldimand Collection, the Public Record Office of London, the Gage letter-books in Harvard University Library, and from the Sir William Johnson MSS. in the New York State Library, we have managed to obtain an almost complete set of the letters concerning the West which passed between the commandants in Illinois, General Gage, and the minis-

istry. George Morgan's letter-book, referred to in the introduction, belongs to a descendant of Morgan. A copy of it is now in the Illinois State Historical Library in Springfield. It will be needless to mention the numerous volumes of printed sources that have been used.

IT will be noticed that there is no indication of the printers in the pamphlet, so that the indirect method of proof must be used in establishlishing their identity as in the case of the author. Fortunately results have been more certain, for we are limited by the evidence of Du Simitiere to the printers of Philadelphia. The problem appeared at first to be very simple. In Hildeburn's "Issues of the Press in Pennsylvania" appears this notice:

"Invitation Serieuse aux Habitants des Illinois. [Philadelphia: W. and T. Bradford. 1772.] 8vo. pp. 15. 2784

"'A Philadelphie MDCCLXXII,' says Du Simitiere."

Although Du Simitiere is quoted as authority only for the city and date, yet it was expected that the name of the printers might be given in his note books; but those both in the Ridgeway Library at Philadelphia and in the Library of Congress were searched without finding mention of the pamphlet.

There was a chance that the pamphlet was adververtised in the newspapers of Philiadelphia, but a search of the files for the years 1772 to 1774 failed to discover any notice of it.

We were limited, therefore, to the pamphlet itself. The solution of the problem was furnished

us by the following note from Dr. Victor H. Paltsits, at the time connected with the New York Public Library:

"The appearance of certain elementary ornaments in a printed book of the period is not, in my judgment, an essential criterion to establish the printer, unless such evidence is supported by other considerations. For example we find some of the same ornaments in books printed in this year (1772) at Salem, Mass., Newport, R. I., New York and Philadelphia — to mention those particularly investigated. You remember that Hildeburn states on the authority of Du Simitiere that the 'Invitation' was printed at Philadelphia in 1772. I think this is contributory evidence to some which I have found.

"If you will look in the copy of 'Poems of Several Occasions, with some other Compositions,' by Nathanial Evans (Philadelphia; Printed by John Dunlap, in Market Street, 1772), you will find at the foot of page 142 precisely the same combination of ornaments that appears on the title page of the 'Invitation;' if you will look also on page xi, you will find that the headbolt is precisely the same combination of ornaments as the headbolt on p. 3 of the 'Invitation.' I am therefore strongly in favor of saying that this tract of yours was printed

by John Dunlap at the Newest Printing-Office, in Market-street, Philadelphia. I have also found that Evans was advertised as 'Just Published,' in the Pennsylvania Gazette for August 26, 1772."

